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Journal of the Society of Arts.

FRIDAY, JULY 9, 1858.

MEETING OF COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7TH, 1858.

The Council held their first meeting this day since their election. C. Wentworth Dilke, Esq., Vice-president, was elected Chairman for the current year.

PREMIUM LIST.

The Council have determined to issue a new Premium List for the ensuing Session. Members are requested to forward to the Secretary any suggestions relative to desiderata in Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce.

SMALL PARCELS POST.

The Committee appointed by the Council for considering the expediency of establishing a General Post for Small Parcels, have made the following

REPORT.

By the law, as it now stands, every letter is defined to be a parcel, and every parcel transmitted by the post is defined to be a letter. The Treasury is restrained from charging more for letters than the rates particularised in the Act, but is allowed an unlimited discretion as to the imposition of any lower rates which may appear to it to be required by the public convenience and interests in the revenue. The whole principle of a parcel postage, and the rates at which it may be best conducted for the public advantage, are by the legislature thus beneficially committed to the executive government.

At this time, when, by the repeal of the newspaper stamp, a deficiency has been occasioned in one branch of revenue, the Committee hope to show that, by the improvement of the parcel postage, much may be done eventually to make good that deficiency, whilst great service may be rendered to the public and to the postal establishment itself, and even to the chief mail carriers and railway undertakings.

The conveyance of small parcels by the post is not new to it in principle—at all events to the metropolitan district. In 1748, the administration of the penny post was spoken of by De Foe as admirable for the quickness of the transmission of parcels as well as letters from four to eight times a day: "Nor are you," he says, "tied up to a single piece of paper, as in the General Post-office, but any packet under a pound weight goes at the same price." In several of the continental posts a small parcel post is connected with the letter post.

At present, the small parcel post, strictly so called, is, in this country, in a condition of over-taxation worse than that of the old letter post. Even the rate for books is so high as to be resorted to only in very special, and, comparatively to the general book circulation to the provinces, rare cases. The charge, for other things than books or letters, of 2d. per ounce, or 2s. 8d. per lb., is prohibitory, except for light articles, or articles of very small bulk and very high value, or for small matters the rapid transmission of which is extremely important. The

present charge of 2s. 8d. a lb. interposes, in a large proportion of cases, insurmountable barriers to the collection and transmission of paint-boxes, cases of instruments, small models, small objects of art, such as those with which the Society of Arts is conversant. In respect to the labouring classes especially, the present rate of charge offers the like obstructions to the transmission and interchange of small things and articles which are of high social value, to those which prevailed under the old postage system, to trading and family correspondence. A son, in place in London, sends to his mother, by postage-stamps or money-orders, a portion of his wages; she, in return, might send to him a pair of knitted stockings, or some piece of her own work, no larger than a book. A mother may now send to her son in place or in the army, by the present regulations, a quarter of a pound of printed matter for a penny,—she would send him a pair of socks or a "comforter," of no greater weight or bulk, but that the charge at the rate of 2s. 8d. for the pound is prohibitory. Naturalists would transmit specimens, horticulturists would exchange seed, farmers would send samples of corn and cereal produce as often as they now send letters,—where only very small and unsafe samples are now given, full and satisfactory samples would be sent;—tradesmen would transmit small articles to special customers in remote districts, but for the over-taxation, or the extreme overcharge—for the service which ought to be rendered to the public by the public agency.

The necessary expense of the separate transmission of small articles to distant places by any existing private means also in a great majority of cases amounts to a prohibition. In those cases where no portage is required in sending the article to the coach-office, or to the railway-station, or from the terminus or the country coach-office to its destination, the transmission of small articles may be easy, and the charges moderate; but when there are one, two, or three miles of portage at one or both ends the expense frequently exceeds the value of the article which would be sent if the charge were moderate.

It rarely happens that any fault is to be found with innkeepers in respect to their charges for parcel delivery, for in all those cases where the receivers may live at country houses two or three miles from the station or the inn, a porter must be employed for the delivery of that one parcel alone, and the quarter or half day of the porter's time and labour must be paid for—and payment must be made, moreover, for the innkeeper's trouble. But the post has already an agency, established and paid for, which may be called a general portage, for the delivery of letters, available for rendering separate portage, to the inns or the stations, unnecessary over a large part of the country. The post cart which from Kensington and Bayswater collects the letter-bags to be conveyed to St. Martin's-le-Grand, may, without injurious addition to the weights, carry small articles, for each of which the sender must now, if the direction be provincial, get a porter to carry it to the inn, or the station, often at an opposite side of the metropolis. The postman who goes out from the country town a mile or two, to a house or village with a handful of letters, might, without inconvenient addition to his labour, carry a bag of small parcels. It will be found, therefore, in such cases, that at a payment of 4d. for a parcel of a lb. weight the post may do at a profit that which the innkeeper could not do by the payment of the messenger for the one parcel of a shilling or two shillings,—an expense of labour which it is not worth while in the majority of cases to incur, and which is not incurred.

The instances given are of cases of transmission over one line of main carriage from which separate portage at either end is requisite. But when it is required to send any parcel over cross countries, or very long dis-

tances, the changes of carriers and the variations of charges which it is very difficult to ascertain, augment the obstacles to transmission at every change. These obstacles may be illustrated by supposing that a naturalist engaged on the coast at one end of the kingdom wishes to transmit a specimen or a small parcel from the Land's End to John o'Groats or May, the transmission being for the greater part of the distance over large trunk lines of railway, and the private means of conveyance in the highest state of organisation attained, or at present deemed attainable by private means. If, from the great amount of the charge, or from any loss or injury occurring in the transmission, there were occasion to investigate the changes of conveyance, with much labour, and by the aid of directories, they might be found to be as follows:—A small parcel, to be transmitted from the Land's End to May, near Thurso, must be conveyed, 1st, by one foot messenger from the Land's End to St. Buryan; 2, by another foot messenger from St. Buryan to Penzance; 3, from Penzance to Truro by mail cart; 4, from Truro to Plymouth by mail coach; 5, from Plymouth to Exeter by South Devon Railway; 6, from Exeter to Bristol by the Bristol and Exeter Railway; 7, from Bristol to Tamworth by the Midland Railway; 8, from Tamworth to Preston by the London and North Western Railway; 9, from Preston to Carlisle by the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway; 10, from Carlisle to Greenhill by the Caledonian Railway; 11, from Greenhill to Perth by the South Central Railway; 12, from Perth to Aberdeen by the Scottish North-Eastern Railway; 13, from Aberdeen to Keith by the Great North of Scotland Railway; 14, from Keith to Elgin by coach; 15, from Elgin to Inverness by the Inverness and Aberdeen Junction Railway; 16, from Inverness to the South side of the Meikle Terry, near Tuin, by mail; 17, from the South to the North side of Terry by a boat; 18, from Terry to Thurso by mail coach; 19, from Thurso to May by messenger.

Take the case of the need of transmission of a small parcel from the Land's-end to another extremity of the United Kingdom, as to Valencia, in Ireland. It must be conveyed by the seven distinct changes of carriers to Tamworth, and then it must, 8, from Tamworth to Chester by the London and North Western Railway; 9, from Chester to Holyhead by the Chester and Holyhead Railway; 10, from Holyhead to Kingston by the mail packet; 11, from Kingstown to Dublin by the Kingstown and Dublin Railway; 12, from Dublin to Mallow by the Great Southern and Western Railway; 13, from Mallow to Killarney by the mail car; 14, from Killarney to Cahirciveen by another mail car; and, 15, from Cahirciveen to Valencia by foot messenger.

A parcel from May, near Thurso, for Valencia, must be conveyed by eleven different changes or different carriers to Preston; and from Preston to Chester it would be conveyed by the London and North Western Railway, and from Chester to Valencia by the several changes above mentioned, making in all 19 changes. The members of the Chambers of Commerce of such places as Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Leeds, Bradford, or Birmingham, by drawing lines from their own centres to the remote places of demand, may estimate for themselves the obstacles created by the changes of carriers to the transmission of small parcels. Usually each separate carrier has a separate rate of charges. One of the larger railways has upwards of four hundred different prices, charged, not upon any common scale of weight as for a service, but upon estimates of the necessities of the senders and what, from the nature of the goods, they can be made to pay, as to a monopoly for transmission. The railways are often hostile and not always very accommodating towards each other, in respect to the transmission of each others goods, any more than each others passengers. The difficulty in ascertaining any cause of injury or delay which may occur in the transmission of parcels, is as the number of separate carriers. The larger portion of the

parcel traffic will, of course, be within the shorter distances, but in respect to the smaller parcels, the greater and insuperable obstacles to any private conveyance, it may be expected, will be in the larger distances. On the present occasion no question is intended to be raised as to the effect of the unharmonized machinery of upwards of 90 different and conflicting railway companies, for conveyance upon the larger parcels or goods traffic. In respect to smaller parcels, there is little or no experience of the effects of the multiform charges upon any attempted transmissions to the longer distances, the general effect being that the charges for them are simply prohibitory. From thence they are only transmitted at very long intervals when a relation or a friend is travelling to town or to the place of destination, and will charge himself with them as part of his baggage.

The transmission of the small parcels of the description in question, by private conveyance, are so few and exceptional that they may be set aside as of no account, and it may be assumed that the great bulk of them are lost to the railway companies;—those that are sent being lost for separate transmission by being comprehended in the passengers' luggage; and those which are not sent being lost by the operation of the necessarily high prohibitory charge;—any considerable traffic of the kind being, in fact, out of their reach or means of sufficiently moderate charges, by the unavoidable necessary expense of separate portage.

It is submitted that to meet the cases of these smaller parcels, the public postage service should be further utilized, and that in doing so the public revenue may be improved, with gain rather than loss to the railways. The service needed could not be rendered by any separate establishment or by any other means, so cheaply as by the post, in the great class of cases indicated. The establishment charges of the postal agency being already more than paid for by the penny postage upon letters; if we could also have a second distinct and universal system of portage for small articles, the establishment requisite for that separate system must be maintained by an additional payment; and why should the public be put to the additional expense and trouble of an irresponsible and uncertain private agency, when there is a public and responsible agency already established which is available for the purpose? In a great number of cases, as already stated, the unavoidable expense of the second agency must, under any circumstances, be prohibitory for all but parcels of a great weight or of a high value, or very special character to make it worth while to pay for it as for an extraordinary service. No doubt, by the measure proposed, some private conveyance may be slightly interfered with, as coachmen and private carriers were interfered with by the institution of the Post itself—as bankers were interfered with in having, here and there, one of the larger remittances which they might have been charged with sent by post, amidst the vast multitude of smaller remittances which they could never have sent at the present rates, and which would never have been sent at all but for the new and beneficent service by cheap money-orders. Certain stationers petitioned and agitated against the new postage system itself, as they alleged it would interfere with their sale of envelopes and stationery. On such sordid views and ignorant cupidity, the petitioners would have deprived the community of the social and commercial advantages of a six-fold inter-communication, which apart from the new packet system has replaced the revenue. By that change of system the sale of envelopes has, however, been immensely augmented, no doubt, to the profit of the objectors. To maintain the present prohibitory rates on small parcels, for the sake of any private carriers' interest, is to retain unavoidably high charges for the separate portage, amounting to a prohibitory tax, at a vast expense of public inconvenience, for the small gain (if any) of a few private persons. Indeed, under such an extension of service as that proposed, the carriage on the trunk lines and the

railway profit on such carriage would probably be much increased. Mr. Rowland Hill's enlightened principle of saving the public the trouble of inquiring for the right charge, and the trouble of adjustment, by one uniform rate of postage, is applicable to the conveyance of small articles, in respect to which, at present—the public is, in addition to the heavy expense, subjected to the trouble of inquiring, or searching directories, for the proper place of dispatch, and also of looking out for, what is commonly not easily found,—the means and time of certain delivery.

When the destination of any small parcel is in the country or cross roads, the delivery is grievously uncertain, as well as expensive. Those who have had experience of the privilege of franking from large public departments, will have had repeated evidence of the common necessities in respect to small parcels, in the attempts to abuse the privilege for the purpose of getting them conveyed with certainty. At the present time the postal establishment is subjected to a war of evasion, for the conveyance of small parcels as books, of which instances might be given.

The charge for sending the larger parcels by the old mail-coaches was from 12s. to 14s. per cwt. per hundred miles. The average weight of a passenger is under 165 lbs. Assuming the railway charge for carrying first-class passengers were a general charge for the carriage of parcels, it would be at the rate of 1½d. per lb. per 100 miles.

Some time ago the estimated distance of the transmission of letters in England was about seventy miles each, exclusive of those sent by the district posts. An average of 100 miles for each small parcel, inclusive of those transmitted by the district posts and delivered within the districts, would probably be a very wide one.

It has been avowed on good authority that locomotive expenses on railways do not, on an average, exceed 9½d. per mile, and that "the cost of running a train may be assumed to be, in most cases, about 15d. per mile." But it is observed in a paper by Mr. Edward Page, Inspector General of Mails, that "these rates, while they no doubt include in some cases special elements of expense not covered by the average of 15d. per mile, are independent of the receipts obtained from passengers, parcels, and, in some cases, from goods, earnings which, added to the Post-office allowance have, in many instances, rendered the mail train one of the most profitable trains on the line," instead of being, as is sometimes supposed, a sacrifice and a grievance. Indeed it appears on impartial examination, that although the speed of the transmission of letters has been augmented by railway, the cost of the conveyance appears to be augmented against the public, the present rates being, in some instances, at from 2s. to 4s. per mile, or at a profit of from 60 to 260 per cent. on the actual cost, that is to say, supposing the train carried nothing but the mail. The contrast will be seen in a Table, from the Postmaster-General's second Report.

	Mails conveyed by Railways.				Mails Conveyed by Coaches, &c.			
	Number of Miles per Week	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Number of Miles per Week	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.
England	21,089	s. d. s. d. 0 9½ 4 10 ½			19,371	d. s. d. 2½ 0 10½		Exemption from Tolls.
Ireland	2,503	1 5½ 3 4 6 2			7,293*	2 0 8		
Scotland	3,537	0 8½ 3 2 2 ½			5,003	2½ 0 6½		
United Kingdom	27,109	0 10 4 10 ½			31,667	2½ 0 10½		Exemption from Tolls.

* The corresponding number of miles in the Report for 1854, was, by an error, much overstated,

It appears, by the last report of the Postmaster-General of the United States, that the average cost per mile there (where coal and fuel is much dearer than in England) paid for the postal use of the railway, is only 5½, being little more than half the payment in this country.

The working expense of railway carriage of goods in bulk is known to be about three-eighths of 1d. per ton per mile—assuming that interest on capital is already paid by passenger or other traffic—so that a halfpenny per ton per mile, for carriage in bulk and distances of more than fifty miles—pays for steam-power, carriages, locomotion, and yields a profit of twenty-five per cent. on the work.* One halfpenny per mile is charged at the "clearing house" for each additional carriage, but it is now ascertained that supposing "the steam is up," three halfpence per mile pays for the additional steam power, for the wear and tear of the carriage, for the wear and tear of the road, for each additional carriage put on, and for its additional load, whether of goods or of passengers. But, taking even the rates of charges by mail coach, and the highest rates of charge for railway conveyance at 1½d. per lb. per 100 miles—taking a single parcel, if to the 1½d. for the main carriage in bulk, with others, we add a farthing—or, if that be too little—a halfpenny for the collection of the parcel from the letter receiving-house; and a halfpenny to the letter-carrier for its delivery from the place of arrival to the place to which it is directed, we have 2½d. per lb. for the cost of the labour on the prime cost of the service required for the public. The exact sums would be matter of investigation. But, assuming the cost stated to be near the mark, the public might be served at the rate adopted, in respect to printed matter, of 1d. for every four ounces, or 4d. per lb. for the conveyance of small parcels, with remunerative charges to the postage-staff and the letter carrier, which extra payment to the officers of the post for extra work is considered to be just and necessary, and consistent with a good profit to the revenue.

It is assumed that the business of conveyance should be left quite free and open, and that, for all the larger packages, where time and convenience served, the present conveyances would no doubt continue at the cheaper rate at which they now are carried on. There is at present much parcel delivery by companies and private carriers, at rates under 1d., and even of a halfpenny per lb. By the South Western Railway Company, parcels under 7 lbs. are carried upwards of 70 miles for 6d.; under 28lbs., 39 miles for 8d. If the public right to utilise their own establishments for their own purpose were admitted to be justly questionable, the proposed rate of charge will be a high protection-duty to the fair interests of all private carriers, for they may be confident that

* The following are illustrations of some goods charges of the Great Western and North Western—

Hogsheads	} From London to Birmingham.
Barrels	
Chicory root	
Lump Sugar	} 27s. 6d. per Ton.
Raisins	
Figs	
Coffee	
Tea	32s. 6d. „
	3) 81. 8
	27. 3
	12
	327
	4

2240 lbs. 1308 q. = ¾ q. per lb. for 108 miles, or ¼d. per lb. for 182 miles. A farthing per 182 miles—assuming that distance to be the average or mean for all packages sent—will be one farthing per lb.; and anything over one farthing per lb. paid to Railway companies by the Government Post-office will be so much gain to the companies.

the public will not pay 4d. per lb. where there is the option of getting the service performed at a rate of 1d. or a ½d.; neither will the public use the high-priced public postage, unless under strong and exceptional circumstances—that is to say, under those circumstances where the present charges are now, as a general rule, prohibitory. Indeed, on the present footing of the post, it is deemed an error, leading to much troublesome and unnecessary regulation, to assume a monopoly in the delivery of letters. Unless in very rare and exceptional cases, which on a large scale do not compensate even for the trouble of regulation, much less of the police to enforce prohibition, no private carrier can deliver so cheaply as the Post Office now delivers letters. The regulation which provided that there should be no writing in any book sent by post, imposing the trouble of opening every book sent, to save an occasional penny postage stamp, appears to the Committee to have been a regulation on the tradition of a dear post, and that the opening of parcels to prevent the transmission of matter in the nature of letters, would cost more than can be gained by it. There are, no doubt, people who will bestow a shilling's worth of labour to effect a penny saving, but the saving of labour in a busy community will be the general rule, and officers or the public ought not to be taxed with a pound's worth of trouble and labour of inspectors' for the prevention of such petty evasions. If a package does contain a bill of parcels, or a note to be delivered with it to a person resident in the same house, or to a neighbour within a few doors off, why let it go—and do not put the sender to the trouble of a separate dispatch. Let the beginning and end of the actual need of service be the beginning and end of chargeability. The Post-office authorities may be sure that, if anything be required to be delivered half a mile away, their own delivery for a penny will be found to be the most certain, cheap, and speedy, and the interests of the revenue may be confidently left to the operations of the interests of classes, in the more certain and convenient public conveyance.

It is submitted, therefore, that whilst a merely weight parcel as well as book-postage, with such limitations as now exist against sending combustibles or other matters, dangerous or inconvenient, such as are now excepted by the postal regulations—might be made a means of improving the revenue and the postage system, it would confer, in the aggregate, great public conveniences, and be of collateral social advantage similar to that of the new money orders, as well as to the uniform and cheap post itself.

On the principle, then, that the General Post, having the largest established machinery for collection and distribution, and the establishment charges for that agency being already more than paid for, and, indeed, the former revenue being now replaced by the small letter post, the postal agency may be requested to perform other services at a profit—at rates which can only be performed by separate establishments at a loss.

Upon their own observation and practical experience, and reasoning upon general principles, the conclusions above stated were agreed upon, when it appeared that the principles in question had been developed very fully before the Committee of the House of Commons on the conveyance of Mails by Railways.

On examining the evidence, and the report of that Committee, they appear to be so important and conclusive in favour of the views and principles hereinbefore set forth, for the conveyance of all small parcels, as to require that some portions of the evidence should be cited at length. The *italics* and the remarks in brackets are inserted.

The Committee find that, in reference to book parcels, such services of the Post Office (as we assume should be rendered for the conveyance of all parcels whatsoever),

are thus described in the evidence of Mr. Rowland Hill himself:—

“Q. What is the advantage which you think the public have with regard to the conveyance of books by post, instead of by other means of conveyance?—The principal advantage, I think, is, that the present system gives to the public the benefit of a very complete organisation for the distribution of book parcels [and all other parcels]; the organisation of the Post-office is exceedingly complete as compared with that of the railway companies for the same purpose.

“Q. In what particulars?—If a person residing in one part of the country should desire to send a book to another part, he would find very considerable difficulty in knowing how to proceed, if he were entirely dependent upon the railways. North of the Thames, I believe, there is a general organisation for the distribution of parcels, so that a parcel taken, for instance, to Euston-square, would be carried all the way, say, to Aberdeen, for one payment, the sum paid being divided among the several companies concerned, according to an arrangement existing among them; but I believe that that organisation does not extend to railways south of the Thames. It therefore follows that even the towns which are upon railways are not connected one with another for purposes of this kind; but the difficulty is even greater, if an attempt be made to send a book [a small parcel] otherwise than through the post from one village to another; for instance, suppose a person living at a village in the neighbourhood of Wells should desire to send a book [small parcel] to a friend living at some village in the neighbourhood of Inverness. The parcel would have to be carried first, by a *village carrier*, probably, to Wells; then by coach from Wells to the nearest railway station; then by railway to London; then by van through London to the Euston-square station; thence by railway to Aberdeen, from Aberdeen to Inverness by coach, and from Inverness to the village by the *village carrier* [and these carriers must now commonly be employed and their time paid for, for the carriage of the single parcel]. Seeing that the parcel would have to pass through so many hands, I have every reason to believe it would be quite impossible for the person sending it to ascertain beforehand what would be the total charge which he or his friend would be subject to; and in the event of the parcel being lost on the way, it would evidently be almost impossible for any effectual inquiry to be made as to who was in fault. On the other hand, if the book [or small parcel] be sent by the post, the person sending it has no trouble of inquiring as to the means of despatching it; he has merely to put it into the nearest post-office, pay upon it a moderate, fixed, and well-known rate of charge, and it reaches its destination without any further care on his part; and should it be lost or detained, he has no difficulty whatever in addressing his inquiry to the Post-office, with the view of ascertaining where the fault lies. I think the Committee will see that the Post-office organisation for the purpose of distributing book [or small] parcels is therefore incomparably superior to any organisation which exists among the railway companies.

“Q. If a parcel is despatched from England to Ireland, does the same postage carry it the whole way?—Yes; the uniform rate carries the parcel from any part of the United Kingdom to any other part; it would carry it even from the Channel Islands to the Shetland Islands.”

Some of the larger railway companies having put forward the practice of carrying small parcels by the post as a ground for demanding a considerable rate for the conveyance of mails for the public, or more than the common rates to private individuals, the following replies were made to them, in behalf of the public, by the Post Office authorities:—

“In reply to your (*i.e.* the Companies') complaint that the Post-office has well-nigh monopolised the parcel traffic to which in your opinion railway companies had every

reason to look as a legitimate source of revenue, it is sufficient to say:—1st. That the statement is a great exaggeration, and that your calculations of such traffic are founded on very erroneous data. 2nd. That by far the larger number of the existing railways, your own inclusive, were commenced since the establishment of penny postage, the time at which the Post-office began to share in the traffic to which you refer. 3rd. That the railway companies have no exclusive right in the parcel traffic, and, indeed, should be the last to complain of that interference with existing modes of conveyance which they themselves (I am far from speaking in blame) have carried to an extent for which it would be difficult to find a precedent. And lastly, it might be shown that the distribution of small parcels by the Post-office with its undivided responsibility, and its wide organisation, uniting every town and every village one with another, and thus supplying facilities which the railways do not possess, so far from injuring the railway companies, yields them a beneficial traffic. Its advantage to the public at large can need no demonstration.”—"I may mention," says Mr. Hill, "that with a view to this examination, I have made some inquiries of the publishers who use the book post extensively, and the information that I have obtained from them is to this effect, viz., that the large majority of the books sent through the post would not, but for the convenience afforded by the Post-office, be sent at all; and that the minority are not abstracted as small parcels which would otherwise be conveyed by the railway companies, but are taken from the large booksellers' parcels, such as are usually sent from the London publishers to the country booksellers. Now, as there can be no doubt that the Post-office pays the companies at a higher rate for the conveyance of the mails than that which the booksellers pay for their parcels, it would follow that, even if the whole of the books sent through the post were abstracted from the booksellers' parcels, the railway companies would still be gainers; but inasmuch as we not only pay a higher rate, but send a large number of books which otherwise would not be sent at all, it is manifest that the companies gain in two ways."

This reasoning is completely sustained by further evidence, and is at all points applicable, as previously stated, to the proposed improvement of the conveyance of small parcels, and illustrative of the views of this Committee.

Efforts were made by the railway directors on the Committee of the House of Commons, to show that the conveyance of small parcels by the post impeded the general letter conveyance, but these efforts failed. Mr. Hill was asked:—

Q. Have you any reason whatever to believe that the conveyance of such letters as may be called parcel letters interferes in any way with the due conveyance of ordinary letters and newspapers?—Not the slightest.

Mr. Hill further illustrates this subject:—

Q. "With respect to the conveyance and distribution of these small parcels, do you think that any organisation of railways, or otherwise, that could be established, could take the place of that organisation which already exists in the Post-office system, penetrating, as it does, to every quarter of the United Kingdom, and to every remote village and town?—One can hardly conceive the possibility of another organisation equally perfect. If the railway companies were to attempt it, they would incur enormous expenses; and it appears to me to be more to their interest to avail themselves of our organisation than to attempt to establish one to compete with it. I would mention also, if you please, with reference to this question of parcels, that in several parts of the Continent the heavier packets are actually charged at a lower rate; that I know to be the case in France. The charge for a letter not weighing more than seven grammes and a half, which is about equivalent to a quarter of an ounce, will be, on the 1st of July this year (when their law changes), 20 centimes, or 2d.; but for

heavier packets they charge at the rate of 80 centimes, or 8d., for 100 grammes, which is equivalent to about three ounces and a third. Their rates, therefore, for heavy packets are less than one-third of the rate for letters, and there is no limit to the weight that may be sent at those rates.

Q. Do you recollect that Captain Huish, in his own case, gives rather a good illustration of the use of the Post-office, in collecting a great number of small parcels from very remote quarters of the kingdom to one spot?—He does.

Q. What inference do you draw from the Post-office being so used by a gentleman who is himself the manager of the largest railway system in England?—It seems to imply an admission of the very inferior organisation of the railway companies for the purpose of transmitting small packages; and it also, I think, indicates the enormous inconvenience which would be sustained by the public if any attempt were made to withdraw the privilege. It will be seen by Captain Huish's evidence, that the Post-office was employed, not only for the collection of articles on a special occasion, but that, after that occasion had passed by, certain articles continued to be transmitted through the Post-office to Captain Huish's house.

Q. Does it ever happen that a parcel cannot be prepaid by railway from any one place to some other?—I believe that, on the northern side of the Thames, it is possible to send a packet, and to pay the carriage in one sum, from any town to any other town upon the same system of railways; but it is not so on the southern side of the Thames. I took occasion to make the inquiry a few days ago. I was at Brighton, and I found that I could not have pre-paid the carriage of a parcel from Brighton to Dover; and the honourable Member on my left (Mr. MacGregor, a railway director,) will probably be able to tell the Committee whether it would be possible to pre-pay the carriage of a parcel from Dover to Brighton. I have ascertained that it is not. Here you have two lines, which are so closely connected that one may be considered as a branch of the other.

Q. You consider the distribution of small parcels by the Post-office a convenience to the public?—An enormous convenience to the public.

Q. Do you think it is disadvantageous to railway companies?—I do not believe that it is. In the first place, I believe that, if the transmission of them were to be abandoned by the Post-office, very few of those parcels would go by railway; and next, I am quite satisfied that the practice of the Post-office conveying parcels has been so prominently put forward by the railway companies as a hardship upon them, that the awards have been very seriously affected thereby; and I have not the slightest doubt that the railway companies are deriving a much higher profit through the Post-office, in respect of parcels, than they could possibly obtain if they carried the parcels themselves.

Q. Upon what ground do you say you do not think these parcels, if not conveyed by the Post-office, would not be conveyed by railway?—I believe my statement was, that the greater part of them would not be conveyed by railway, for this reason: that the railway companies have not the means of collecting and delivering them, and also because a large number of those parcels, as has been shown in evidence, are charged at very low rates. The companies charge rates so very much higher, that the imposition of those rates would, in all probability, prevent the transmission of most of the parcels. If I recollect rightly, fully three-fourths of the parcels in question are under the weight of two ounces; that is to say, they are carried at rates varying from a penny up to fourpence, and many of those go enormous distances; so that any charge which a single railway company might make upon those parcels must either be exceedingly small, or it must be such that the accumulation of charges would altogether prevent their transmission.

Q. Admitting, as you of course do, that there is a certain amount of competition between the Post-office and railway companies for the carriage of parcels, would you not say that that competition extended only to a small number of those so called parcels that we have been told are sent out from the General Post-office?—I should say that, if a law were passed forbidding the Post-office any longer to carry the parcels in question, very few of those parcels would be sent by the railways, or by any other means.

Q. You do not think people would send pill-boxes and other things of that sort to the other end of Scotland or Ireland?—Certainly not.

Q. Not if they could not go by the Post-office?—No.

Q. That is a startling proposition?—It is one that I am quite prepared to maintain, however startling it may be.

Q. You limit your observation to single pill-boxes?—Certainly. I dare say Morrison would continue to send his pills all over the kingdom; but then they would not go in small quantities, but in large quantities, and the amount of benefit that the companies would obtain from them would be very trifling, and far less, I hold (and that is the important point), than they now get.

Q. Then the difference, if I understand you, is this: that in the one case you do not doubt that so far as the aggregate weight of packages is concerned, the railways are undoubtedly affected by what the Post-office carries; but that the packages separated into small parcels, or what is called the small parcel trade, would not be materially affected if the Post-office did not carry them?—I am of that opinion.

Q. The same aggregate weight would still be carried by railways, whether the Post-office carried it or the railways?—Perhaps so, but if the Post-office pays in respect of the parcels that we carry as high a rate as the public would pay for the conveyance of an equal weight made up, not in small parcels but in large packages, it necessarily follows that the companies are not injured in the slightest degree; on the contrary, so far as our organisation tends to increase the number of articles distributed over the kingdom (and that it does tend to increase them no one for a moment can doubt), the companies themselves are benefited.

Q. In point of fact, you being in the Post-office, which represents a public service, compete with private individuals who have constructed the railways?—The private individuals, when they constructed the railways, had no monopoly of the parcel traffic given them: on the contrary, the honourable Member is perfectly well aware that the early railways were established simply as roads. It was not contemplated in the early legislation upon the subject that railway companies should carry anything; they were simply and solely the owners of the roads; subsequently to that, the penny postage was established. Now, the Act establishing the penny postage dates as far back as August, 1839; since that time a large majority of the railways now open have been established; and therefore, if there is any robbery at all [some of the companies having presumed to use that term], it is a robbery by the railways of the parcels that ought to go by the Post-office; it is the Post-office, therefore, that is entitled to complain of the railway companies stepping in and robbing them. The truth is, however, that both parties are bound to serve the public in the best manner they can, and there is no robbery on either side; those will get the custom who perform the duty most effectually.

Q. You leave out of sight, then, asks an honourable member, a railway director, advocating the supposed interests of the companies, the fact that the railway company with which you were connected, and the one with which I was connected when we met on railway affairs, each obtained their Act of Parliament on premises which showed that they relied on a certain amount of parcel traffic to produce a dividend for their subscribers?

—I cannot speak certainly to the fact, but I very much doubt if there was such reliance; I say that the railways which were constructed many years ago, were all constructed on the expectation that the companies would be simply the owners of the railways, and that is the reason why tolls were inserted in the several Acts of Parliament. The expectation was, that other people would place their engines and carriages upon the railways, and compete one with another. That was the theory, as every gentleman present must be aware, of the early railway system.

Q. But you cannot dispute this: that if, as you say, neither party has any right to complain to the other, when you come to an arbitration between the Post-office and the railway companies, the fact of your competing with them for carrying parcels is a material element to be taken into consideration?—I must contend, it is an element which ought not to be taken into consideration at all. All the arbitrators have to do is to ascertain the weight of the mails, including these parcels; and the hindrance, if any, caused to the working of the line by the Post-office requiring the train to be run at certain hours, and the expense of running at those hours. I hold that they have nothing to do with the question as to what are the contents of our mail; and I would add, in support of that position, that the courts of justice have lately decided that the companies are not entitled to open packages with a view of ascertaining the contents and charging accordingly; they have nothing to do but to ascertain the gross weight.

Q. You deny any claim that the companies have under the arbitration, on the ground that you are competing with them on their own line of railway for their own traffic?—Certainly, I deny it.

Q. But you do not compete with them more than many other individuals do?—Certainly not.

Q. You compete with them by carrying and paying for upon their line in one form, what might be carried and paid for in a different form?—Certainly; and I hold that, if it be a competition, it is one highly advantageous to the companies themselves. *I believe that the railway companies could not take a step more injurious to themselves than one which would deprive us, if it were in their power, of the right of collecting and delivering parcels, for I hold that that is what we do. We collect the parcels and we deliver them, and we pay the railway companies and others for their conveyance.*

Q. That is parcels paying letter rates, and which now pass through the Post-office since the last arrangement?—Yes, since the abolition of the limitation as to weight.

Q. A good deal has been said about the interference of the Post-office with the railways in conveying parcels, and it has been stated more than once that of late years, since this regulation was made, the number of small parcels sent by the railways has very much diminished; is it not the fact that since that time a decision has been come to in the courts of law, by which it has been declared to be legal on the part of traders to collect small parcels, and send them in one large package by railway at the ordinary rates of parcels?—Certainly."

The railway directors alleged considerable loss from the carriage of a parcels by the post. Captain M. Huish was asked—

Q. Have you any remarks to make upon the carriage of parcels by the Post-office?—No further than that we consider, and think we have reason to consider, that the Post-office is our great competitor for the carriage of small parcels, and that it has very materially indeed affected our revenue.

Q. To what extent do you suppose?—It is impossible for me to say to what extent; it must be an estimate, but I have very little doubt in my own mind that the abstraction by the Post-office of our small parcel traffic has been very nearly, if not quite, equivalent to the whole amount we receive for carrying the mails.

This witness estimated the loss at £55,000 per annum

for the London and North Western Railway alone, which at the same rate for all other railways of Great Britain, would make the total loss to them upwards of a million per annum, or nearly equal to the net revenue to the public of the post itself. Other railway witnesses stated as a fact, in general terms, that "great loss" occurred to their respective lines from the Post Office competition. Now, it turns out that the total amount of money received by the post for the transit of parcels was at that very time little more than £16,000 per annum for the whole kingdom—a fact in itself proving the prohibitory nature of the present rates for small parcels. The very small sum may be cited in support of the Committee's conclusion that the present rates of the post itself are, to a large extent, prohibitory, as are also railway charges, and must be. It may be here observed, that in those continental states where the post is used for the conveyance of parcels to an extent beyond anything which is here contemplated, as expedient, or as practicable, under the system of perfectly free private conveyance proposed, with much dearer coals, dearer iron and materials, with one-third lower rates of fares even for the like speeds and better accommodation to the public, the return on the capital invested averages upwards of 5 per cent. as against the general average of little more than 3 per cent. yielded to the capitalist by the existing railway management in England. In respect to the inability of the railways to deal with the delivery of the smaller parcels, and the public utility of a parcel post, the manager of the London and North Western Company gives testimony. Captain M. Huish was asked—

"Q. The evidence given by Mr. Hill is, that the up-parcels do not form anything like one-half of those which go by the down mails?—We find, taking a series of years, that our up-parcels into London are about one-half of those which go out of London. I might give a very striking illustration of this subject which fell under my own personal observation. Last year I had a bazaar in my grounds near London for a very popular object connected with Ireland; about £2,000 worth of work was sent to Mrs. Huish for this bazaar; it was very well attended, and a number of titled ladies were kind enough to assist in it. My connection with that bazaar first gave me an insight into the working of the Post-office, for although I will not say that a grand piano came by post, everything short of it for this bazaar came by post. Of these £2,000 worth of worked slippers, and all the endless things which ladies made for the bazaar, a great quantity came by post [it being perfectly free to the railways to have collected and delivered them at the same very high price]; it did not terminate there, for a very large amount of the work which came from Ireland through the post was composed of that beautiful work for which the Irish schools are so celebrated; by means of the bazaar it was brought to the acquaintance of a number of ladies in London, and the result has been that since that time Mrs. Huish has established a complete system of trade with those schools, and she gets over every day lace, and all sorts of things, by post, not any of which ever goes by the railway company." [We may add, not one of which, probably, could be carried by the railway company without separate portage, a charge which would be prohibitory.]

"Q. With reference to the parcels which came from various parts of Ireland, and the schools which are dotted over the whole of the interior of Ireland, the west coast, and everywhere else, do you believe it is possible, by any combination of railways which exist at the present time, with steamboats, that those parcels could have reached London with the same punctuality and ease that they did by the Post-office?—They would not have reached London quite so cheaply [the charge by post being a high one], I am aware; but I should like to have tried if I could not have brought them quite as correctly."

"Q. As you are perfectly aware, those schools are dotted all over Ireland, upon private estates and in villages, and are matters of social improvement taken up by private individuals in the different localities of Ireland; do you think it possible, without an enormous expense, which would be far more than tantamount to any gain, to organise any system by which those parcels could reach London from all those innumerable points, with any degree of punctuality?—I am quite prepared to admit that the public does derive a very considerable advantage from the fact of the postal arrangements being in one hand, instead of being divided between a number of railway corporations, who have to work into each other's hands; I do not intend to bring this instance forward as a real grievance, to prevent the Post-office pursuing the system, but only as an illustration of the sweeping way in which the Post-office competes with us for parcel traffic; I admit what Mr. Rowland Hill has said, that we have no monopoly of parcel traffic, and do not ask for a monopoly."

"Q. Is it not one of the greatest conveniences which the public have in consequence of the plan pursued by the Post-office, that the Post-office is a direct communication, not by railway only, but they use railways where railways are effective, and steamboats where steamboats are effective; and where neither of those plans suit their convenience, they are obliged to have recourse to other means to reach every village in the United Kingdom; so that there exists a direct means of communication almost as speedily as can be obtained under the circumstances of the case, with every part of the United Kingdom?—That is so, undoubtedly; I do not desire to deprive the extreme districts of that convenience, or the outlying rural parts, of the advantage which they now possess, but I think it is carried a little too far; and it would not surprise me any morning to find barrels of oysters with penny stamps upon them, carried over the kingdom as post letters."

The case of the bazaar is one on which the Society of Arts might rely as parallel to its own experience in respect to the collection and transmission of objects of art for its own exhibitions. But it is highly illustrative of the sense in which the word "cheapness" is used by the railway companies; that when it is admitted by the witness in behalf of the company that they could not have carried the parcels "quite so cheaply" as the post, the cheapness referred to was a rate of two shillings and eight pence per pound, or no less than £298 per ton.

In a letter by Mr. E. J. Page, the Inspector-General of Mails, published in the Appendix to the second report of the Postmaster-General, a further illustration is given of the principle in question. He states, as bearing upon the comparison of the railway and postal facilities for the conveyance of book parcels (which we submit as equally applicable to all small parcels)—

"As bearing strongly upon this comparison of facilities, I may mention the somewhat remarkable fact, that copies of the very report of the Committee of Consultation of the London and North-Western Railway, in which the Post-office is represented as unduly competing with railway companies for the carriage of books and parcels, were extensively circulated to that Company's shareholders through the medium of the book post, not merely to towns and villages at a distance from their railway, but even to Liverpool, to which the Companies' own trains might have carried them without any charge whatever. When it is recollected that there are about 10,500 post-offices scattered throughout the United Kingdom, that there is scarcely a village without a post-office, and scarcely even a hamlet without a regularly established official means of communication with a post-office, and that consequently persons even in the most secluded districts can communicate by post with all parts of the kingdom with tolerable certainty, and with very little trouble or expense, it will readily be seen that such facilities as these must lead to the transmission of

books and documents [and small parcels of all kinds] which otherwise would never be sent."

He adds further:—

"Now, even assuming for a moment that every book parcel which the Post-office carries is abstracted from parcels which would otherwise be conveyed by railway, it is obvious that the companies would not sustain any loss by such parcels becoming part of the mail, if the Post-office paid to the companies for its mails rates only as high as the booksellers pay them for their parcels, in which, for the most part, such books would be conveyed, if they were sent at all. But it is a matter of fact, that the general rates paid by the Post-office to railway companies are largely in excess of those paid by the booksellers for their parcels. It follows, therefore, that the companies, instead of being injured, would be benefited by any such abstraction, seeing that, besides receiving a higher rate of remuneration for the carriage of these book parcels, they are entirely relieved of the cost of collection and delivery, a cost which, as Mr. Stephenson shows, renders goods traffic less profitable to railway companies than passenger traffic."

Mr. G. A. Saunders, the manager of the Great Western Company, alleges that they could carry parcels as punctually as the post, but he admits exceptions which, when examined, establish the whole case for utilising the post.

"Q. Do you think the railways could organise any plan by which parcels could be delivered as punctually and conveniently by them as they are now by the Post-office?—I think they can be delivered just as punctually and conveniently, *with the single exception* [*i. e.*, eight or ten thousand] *of the more remote places where we have not got delivering agents*; in which case the Post-office bags taken to particular places possess an advantage over us, and it is there principally that they obtain the parcel trade.

"Q. You would have more difficulty than the Post-office have, would you not, in sending parcels into remote villages?—There is no doubt of that [that is to say, in the vast majority of cases]. With regard to parcels I would make this observation, that we avail ourselves principally of the mail-carts that are running to and from our stations, and we make them the parties to carry these very parcels to and from different districts in the country; I believe that one great advantage the Post-office derive from the mode in which we carry on our business in combination with them is, that they get their mail bags carried much cheaper between the stations and the surrounding country, because these mail-carriers derive a benefit from the distribution of our parcels; for instance, at Chippenham station, whence the bags are distributed far down in the lower part of Wiltshire, the mail cart owners who carry those mail bags make a considerable profit out of the parcels that we give them for distribution.

"Q. You say that you make use of the mail-carts to a great extent for the conveyance of *your own* parcels?—Yes; if you send a parcel from London to Malmesbury, for instance, that parcel is charged from London to Malmesbury, and it is composed of three different portions of amount; for bringing it to Paddington, 3d. is paid; for taking it from Paddington to Swindon, 9d. is charged; I am assuming those sums; and then the carrier gets his 3d. or 4d. for taking it over to Malmesbury. The way in which these people are paid for it is by getting their proportion out of the whole charge made for the parcel; we hand over those parcels to the mail carrier, and his gain is derived from the whole portion of the charge as between the railway station and the place of ultimate delivery."

According to the witnesses, they use the mail-carts, and thereby send goods free of toll, on those turnpike trusts which are prohibited from taking more than five per cent. interest,—which have been deprived of paying

traffic, and have been extensively injured by the powerful competition of the railways.

"Q. From the extensive means the Post-office have of delivery, they certainly have the preference, to some extent, as carriers of parcels, have they not?—*No doubt they possess advantages over the company.*"

If the number of receiving-houses or delivering-houses of the largest company in the metropolis, be compared with the number of the receiving-houses and the deliveries of the Post-office, the case would be decisive for the adoption of a general public agency. But it is the remote suburbs of the metropolis, and the larger towns, the remote villages, the remote farms, and the remote gentlemen's seats—which comprise the larger bulk of the population—which are not to be reached without a new and separate agency; and in respect to them, it is demonstrable that, if the railway companies or any private carriers were to establish a new and separate and universal portorage, and were to charge only the prime cost of the labour of that new portorage, and nothing for any new investment, that separate charge must, to be remunerative, be prohibitory of the convenience and the traffic now contemplated.

In fact, as maintained by Mr. Rowland Hill (himself a railway shareholder, and formerly chairman of the London and Brighton Railway, one of the best administered railways in the country), it is conclusively established to be to the interest of the companies themselves that the Post-office should act as collectors and distributors of these small parcels, which the companies or private carriers cannot everywhere collect, or everywhere distribute themselves. It is clear that the post must thus largely augment the main traffic of the railways, for which they charge so highly and profit so largely upon the actual expense of conveyance.

The effect upon common carriage of the change we propose, appears to be, in some respects, exemplified by the change occasioned by the abolition of the compulsory newspaper stamp.

When the stamp was compulsory, and when it conferred the privilege of free transmission, the great bulk of the stamped papers were conveyed by post. Since the abolition of the compulsory stamp, the number of newspapers conveyed by the post has been reduced to one-third the previous amount; the cheaper modes of private carriage being now resorted to for the conveyance of the bulk; the smaller proportion, still transmitted by post, being exceptional cases, where there are no regular news-vendors cheaper deliveries, and where the postal delivery must be resorted to, from the alternative of the expense of separate portorage being prohibitory. The bulk of the parcel or goods transmission would remain with the railways or with private carriers, and the bulk of the carriage along the main lines would be augmented by the amount of small parcels which will hereafter be sent at the book parcel rates, composed of the exceptional cases where the expense of separate portorage is now prohibitory.

The facts confirmatory of this view are thus stated by the Inspector General of Mails, Mr. Page, in the document already cited:—

"It has been ascertained," he says, "with regard to the night mails from London, by which by far the largest proportion of books is conveyed, that the reduction in the number and total weight of newspapers conveyed by these mails, since the alteration in the Newspaper Stamp Act, is more than *six* times the total number and weight of *all the book parcels*. To show the extent to which weight has thus been abstracted from the mails, I may mention that the number of carriage loads of bags sent from the General Post-office to the Euston-square station on Friday nights, has, since the recent Newspaper Stamp Act took effect, been *five* less than previously, and that the average nightly reduction of weight of newspapers despatched from London is upwards of *two tons and a-half*. At the same time it is

beyond doubt, that the effect of the Act in question has been largely to increase the newspaper circulation of the kingdom, and consequently to add still further to the earnings of the railway companies."

"In fact," he says, "the book post service [to which we add the small parcel service] is one so different in its character and objects from that to which the parcel arrangements of the railway companies are adapted, that it may fairly be assumed it would hardly exist at all but for the extensive facilities for its development which the Post-office possesses. The evidence given before the Select Committee on the Conveyance of Mails by Railways (1854), especially that of Mr. Charles Knight, the eminent publisher, is very decided on this point. He says (3,872), 'that the cases in which books are sent by post may be nearly all considered as exceptional cases to the ordinary commercial operations of publishing,' and again (3,870) and (3,892), 'that the book post may be looked upon as a mere auxiliary to the conveyance of parcels by other means,' and (3,860) 'that if the existing regulations were stopped, the public would not be able to derive the same advantages through any other channel.'"

The conclusion may be adopted for the general small parcel conveyance by post, from the experience, as above stated, of the book conveyance by post, that at the like rates it will be simply auxiliary to any conveyance of parcels by other means, which open competition may supply at lower rates.

In such instances as that of the Bazaar, only the lightest description of articles could have been forwarded, and many important contributions must have been excluded which could not have borne the present rates of parcel carriage. The railway companies would not, for their own book distribution, think of subjecting themselves to the charge for separate portage.

There were on the Committee of the House of Commons the chairmen of two large companies, and considerable shareholders. Nevertheless, the following resolutions appear to have been passed unanimously,—the objection to the public right and principle of a parcel-post may be assumed to have been abandoned by the chief representatives of the companies.

"From a personal inspection of the Post-office on the day alluded to by Mr. Hill," say the Committee of the House of Commons, "your Committee have reason to believe that a large proportion of these parcels were of a sort which would not be sent, but for the facilities afforded by the Post-office in their distribution.

"It is, however, undoubtedly the case" [the contrary, it may be observed, was very clearly proved], "that a considerable amount of parcels is thus abstracted from the usual means of conveyance, and that the Post-office is become, to that extent, a competitor with public carriers.

"Your Committee by no means recommend that the present practice should be abandoned; on the contrary, they believe that incalculable advantages are derived from it by the public, not only as regards convenience in the transmission of common parcels, but more particularly in the diffusion of literature and knowledge in country districts, which could not be approached with equal facility by other means."

The decision of the Committee of the House of Commons, and more particularly the evidence given before that Committee in the course of the important investigation, will be found an impartial examination in complete concurrence with the conclusions first stated in this report. The committee's decision establishes, upon the postal experience and testimony, the principle of a general small parcel post for the benefit of the public, and indeed for the real interests of the railway shareholders themselves.

What some persons call leaving the business of conveyance to the "free course of trade," is, in fact, leaving the public conveniences and necessities to multiform irresponsible monopolies. To dispense with the services of a public and nearly universal portage—to forbid

them to be exercised in free competition, even at high charges on the working expenses, is to maintain a protectionism of the worst sort.

The returns show that whilst 13 per cent. only of the weight of the mails carried is made up of letters, and 2 per cent. of book parcels, no less than 75 per cent. of the weight formerly conveyed consisted of newspapers.

From the calculations of the deficit of revenue, but, above all, from the cheaper rate at which it will be practicable to convey large parcels, in which the newspapers may be conveyed along the main lines at less than fourpence per lb., the reduced rate at which printed matter is carried, it appears to be highly probable that a void will have been occasioned in the public mail bags for some time at least, by the proposed alterations of the law in respect to newspaper stamps. This void the improvement and extension of the small parcel postage would no doubt eventually fill up. We say eventually, because we believe that the increased effects of the improvement, important as they are, will be gradual.

In fixing the rate of postage for printed matter at fourpence per lb., it is to be presumed, and it is indeed clear, that the interests of the revenue have been fairly consulted. If no such rate had already been officially fixed, we should have proposed, that the charges for the establishment being already more than paid for, the amount of the extra service in collection and distribution, as well in main carriage required to be performed, should be carefully and impartially analysed, and its prime cost determined, and a fair profit allowed to the post and to the postal establishment, and also extra remuneration to the collectors and distributors.

By the opponents to the public parcel postage, it was alleged that it must impede the transit of letters. This allegation was decidedly negated by Mr. Rowland Hill, who showed that a very trivial effect would be produced on the transit of letters if the parcel postage were taken away;—therefore, very little effect upon the dispatch of letters can be fairly anticipated from the gradual additions consequent on the proposed improvement of the parcel postage. The Committee apprehend that, with the additional emolument derivable from an improved and cheapened parcel postage, deliveries by the use of carriages or horses may be eventually extended, and the general transit be improved to an extent proportioned to the extension of business, as with all great private establishments.

The proposed parcel postage may be made the means of improving and completing the postal deliveries in rural and thinly-populated districts, where the deliveries are now very imperfect.

In France, the postal delivery is established direct to every house. In England, the delivery to every house is not complete, although, under the existing administration, it is rapidly tending to completion. It is to be hoped that the measure proposed may aid the more complete accomplishment of that important object.

The Committee of the Society, with their Chairman, Lord Ebrington, have availed themselves of a permission to see the central establishment at St. Martin's-le-Grand in operation.

One night's inspection of the ordinary business sufficed to convince the Committee that the present edifice is inadequate to the accommodation of the present postal service of the country. That edifice was designed for the old system of postage, in which artificial light was required, to examine letters, for their taxation for enclosures chargeable with double postage; it is dark, and heated to excess with the gas-lights required for the transaction of the present business; it is badly ventilated, and overcrowded, and must be injurious to the health of those who work in it, and who deserve every fair personal accommodation they can receive in the performance of their duty from the public. Since it was constructed, the business has increased more than sixfold beyond the amount for which it was designed. It is

understood that measures are being taken to remedy, as far as may be practicable, the want of ventilation, but the present building cannot be expected to be made suitable to the transaction, with proper comfort to the officers, of a five-fold mass of business.

If the postage business of the country were conducted, at the existing or the proposed rates of charges, as a commercial business, by a commercial firm, there would be no hesitation in immediately acting upon a determination to obtain new and more appropriate premises. The profits arising from the extension of the business, at the proposed rates, would be looked to as a means of obtaining more extended structural arrangements, and for putting the agency on a better footing, systematising completely the whole service.

The Committee confidently urge the adoption of the proposed measure, as one which will conduce to the improvement of the whole of our present postal system, and of the condition of the subordinate agents, and means of general distribution.

Whilst the Committee feel an entire confidence in the main principle of the measure they recommend—corroborated as it is by the powerful evidence recited—they would, as to the executive details, defer most respectfully and confidently to the ability and zeal prevailing in the postal department, by which one of the most important and brilliant administrative reforms of our time has been accomplished, not only for this country, but, by the influence of its example, for the civilised world.

The chief conclusions arrived at upon an examination of the subject are—

First, that the unavoidable labour, and consequent expense and uncertainty of the transmission of very small parcels, particularly over cross-country or through different lines of conveyance, whether by private means or by the public, is at present, in a large proportion of cases, prohibitory.

That the postal establishment, having an agency for the collection and distribution of letters, (or what may be termed an universal portorage, available for the collection and delivery of small parcels), may, without any materially increased establishment charges, and with compensation to the establishment and profit to the revenue, render to the public the increased service of the conveyance of small parcels, at an expense not exceeding that of the book postage, or at a cheaper rate, as respects such small parcels, than could possibly be accomplished by any separate agency for the purpose.

That it may render this service, as has been already done as respects the conveyance of books, without any serious detriment to legitimate private conveyance or railway service—but with increased profit to such private service by increased conveyance in bulk—arising from the increased transmission of small parcels, consequent on the increased convenience for their collection and distribution.

That the proposed extension of the postal service to the transmission of small parcels will be of great convenience and benefit to the arts, to practical science, to industrial occupations, and to family and trading intercommunication.

The Committee therefore propose to submit to Her Majesty's Government, that it will, for the special interest of the arts, and of trade, as well as for the general convenience of the public, as also in the interests of the revenue itself, and with extra pay for extra work, to the public servants performing it—exercise the authority with which it is charged, to remove the limitation of the proposed rates of fourpence per lb. to printed matter, and extend the conveniences of the postal delivery to all other matters, subject to the like limitations for postal convenience to which the book parcel postage is now subjected.

The Committee trust that a due consideration of the facts of the case, and the principles involved in the measure proposed, will have the concurrent support of the im-

partial members of the Chambers of Commerce and of the Institutions in Union throughout the country, to whose especial attention they commend it.

EBRINGTON, *Chairman*.
E. CHADWICK, C.B.
H. COLE, C.B.
PETER GRAHAM.
J. J. MECHE.
SAMUEL MORLEY.
J. A. NICHOLAY.
J. INGRAM TRAVERS.

A copy of the foregoing report has been sent to every Institution in Union with the Society, accompanied by the following letter:—

Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures,
and Commerce, Adelphi, London, W.C.,
8th July, 1858.

SIR,—I am directed by the Council to forward you a Report, which has been presented to the Council by a Committee, on the subject of a Small Parcels Post.

This subject was, some time ago, suggested to the Council as deserving of careful consideration, and the Council appointed a Committee to report upon it.

This Report, a copy of which I send by this post, shows that the subject is of very great and general importance, and that it is only necessary to allow parcels to be conveyed at the same rate as printed matter to effect the object.

To enable the Council to take measures, by the Society of Arts, to advance this reform, it would be a great advantage if the collective opinions of the members or of the governing body of your Institution, upon the points raised in the Report, and upon the subject generally, could be produced to assist the judgment of the Council.

I am, therefore, to request that you will cause the necessary steps to be taken, by holding a general meeting of your members or otherwise, for obtaining an expression of the views of your members or managing body in reference to it, and that you will be so kind as to communicate the result to me as early as convenient.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

P. LE NEVE FOSTER, *Secretary*.

EXAMINATIONS, 1858.

Since the publication of the list of certificated candidates, the Council have received from the Local Board at Manchester proper forms of declaration, duly filled up and signed, referring to the papers worked in Arithmetic, Bookkeeping, Trigonometry, and French, by the candidates there. The Council have, therefore, been able to award to them Certificates as follows:—

Candidates'
Numbers.

- 401—John Caw, aged 17, Manchester Athenæum, clerk—A Certificate of Excellence in Arithmetic.
- 404—Thomas Baker, aged 20, Oldham Lyceum, mechanic—A Certificate of Competency in French.
- 405—Thomas Crellin, aged 21, Oldham Lyceum, mechanic—Certificates of Proficiency in Arithmetic, and of Competency in Trigonometry.
- 406—Ralph Crompton, aged 23, Oldham Lyceum, weaver—Certificates of Excellence in Bookkeeping, and of Competency in Arithmetic.
- 410—Charles Henry Berrisford, aged 18, Stockport Mechanics' Institution, mechanic—A Certificate of Competency in French.
- 412—George William Davies, aged 19, Stockport Mechanics' Institution, moulder—A Certificate of Proficiency in Arithmetic.
- 413—Joseph Epton Hadwick, aged 20, Stockport Me-

chanics' Institution, mechanic—A Certificate of Competency in Arithmetic.

- 421.—Matthew T. Higham, aged 19, Miles Platting Mechanics' Institution, warehouse boy—A Certificate of Competency in Book-keeping.

The subjoined letter has been addressed to the Secretary of the Oldham Lyceum, with reference to an irregularity in giving out the papers in Geometry and Algebra, which prevented the declaration required by the Council, in reference to the working of the papers, from being signed in its integrity by the Local Board :—

Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, 8th July, 1858.

SIR,—I am directed by the Council of the Society of Arts to announce to you the decision which they have definitely taken in reference to the Oldham Candidates. The non-compliance with the regulations laid down for the guidance of the Local Boards cannot be passed over, and the Candidates are therefore disqualified from obtaining Certificates and Prizes. The Council much regret that these Candidates, from no default of their own, have become thus disqualified; but in order that the Candidates in all parts of the country may feel secure that the competition will be perfectly fair, the essential conditions which regulate it must be well known and strictly observed. They were fully communicated to the Local Board of the Institutional Association of Manchester, and the Council of the Society of Arts must support its regulations and maintain the disqualifications of the Candidates. You will probably be able to make better arrangements for conducting your Examinations at Oldham next year. The Council desire me to request you to present to No. 405, Thomas Crellin, the enclosed sum of £5, and to No. 406, Ralph Crompton, the enclosed sum of £3, as a present from this Society in token of its sympathy with the Candidates in the disappointment which they must necessarily feel.

These are the amounts which it appears from the report of the Examiners these Candidates would have received as Prizes if they had not been formally disqualified for receiving them.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

P. LE NEVE FOSTER, Secretary.

The Secretary, Lyceum, Oldham.

INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.

The Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers have just awarded the following Premiums for papers read at the meetings during the past session :—

1. A Telford Medal, to James Atkinson Longridge, M. Inst. C.E., and a Council Premium of Books, to Charles Henry Brooks, for their Paper "On Submerging Telegraphic Cables."
2. A Telford Medal, to George Robertson, Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his "Investigation into the Theory and Practice of Hydraulic Mortar."
3. A Telford Medal, to James Henderson, Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his Paper "On the Methods generally employed in Cornwall, in dressing Tin and Copper Ores."
4. A Telford Medal, to Robert Jacob Hood, M. Inst. C.E., for his Paper "On the Arrangement and Construction of Railway Stations."
5. A Telford Medal, to Major-General George Borlase Tremenheere, Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his Paper "On Public Works in the Bengal Presidency."
6. A Telford Medal, to Alfred Giles, M. Inst. C.E., for his Paper "On the Construction of the Southampton docks."
7. A Watt Medal, and the Manby Premium to Guilford Lindsay Molesworth, Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his Paper "On the Conversion of Wood by Machinery."
8. A Watt Medal, to Thomas Spencer Sawyer, for his

Paper "On the Principal Self-acting and other Tools employed in the Manufacture of Engines, Steam Boilers, etc."

9. A Council Premium of Books, suitably bound and inscribed, to Frederick Charles Webb, Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his paper, "On the Practical Operations connected with Paying-out and Repairing Submarine Telegraph Cables."

10. A Council Premium of Books, suitably bound and inscribed, to Henry Conybeare, M. Inst. C.E., for his "Description of Works recently executed for the Water Supply of Bombay, in the East Indies."

11. A Council Premium of Books, suitably bound and inscribed, to Samuel Alfred Varley, for his Paper "On the Qualifications requisite in a Submarine Cable, for most efficiently transmitting Messages between distant Stations."

12. A Council Premium of Books, suitably bound and inscribed, to Richard Carden Despard, for his "Description of Improvements on the Second Division of the River Lee, with Remarks on the Position of Canals generally."

13. A Council Premium of Books, suitably bound and inscribed, to Alexander Wright, Assoc. Inst. C.E., for his Paper "On Lighting Mines by Gas."

14. A Council Premium of Books, suitably bound and inscribed, to James Brunlees, M. Inst. C.E., for his "Description of the Iron Viaducts erected across the Estuaries Leven and Kent in Morecambe Bay, for the Ulverstone and Lancaster Railway."

It may be mentioned that two of these awards, the Watt Medal and the Manby Premium, are now presented for the first time. The former originated with the Council, who were desirous of possessing some distinctive means of rewarding excellence in communications upon mechanical subjects. The medal has been executed by Mr. Joseph S. Wyon. On the obverse is a beautifully-executed medallion likeness of James Watt, and on the reverse a representation of the steam-engine, as constructed by him. The Manby Premium is due to the liberality of Mr. Charles Manby, F.R.S., who has filled the office of secretary for the last nineteen years, and with so much satisfaction to the members, that a few months back they presented him with a clock and candleabra, and a cheque for £2,000. In acknowledging this handsome testimony of his services, Mr. Manby requested that the Council would receive debenture stock of the value of £200, bearing 5 per cent. interest, to be expended in an annual premium. In accepting this offer it was resolved that the premium in question should bear the title of the "Manby Premium."

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

During the week ending 3rd July, 1858, the visitors have been as follows:—On Monday, Tuesday, and Saturday (free days), 4,128; on Monday and Tuesday (free evenings), 3,861. On the three Students' days (admission to the public 6d.), 1,111; one Students' evening, Wednesday, 174. Total, 9,274.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS.

PRINTED SESSIONAL PAPERS.

Parl. No.

Delivered on 1st July, 1858.

- 348. East India—Home Accounts.
- 360. Dead Letter Office—Return.
- 366. Spirits—Return.
- 372. East India Company (sums repaid)—Return.
- 323. Cambridge University—Copies of Statutes.
- 165. Bills—Civil Bills, &c., (Ireland) Act Amendment.
- 166. ——— Corrupt Practice Prevention Act Continuance.
- 167. ——— Navigation Advances (Ireland).

Delivered on 2nd July, 1858.

- 353. Tobacco—Return.
- 357. Greenwich Hospital—Return.
- 367. Paper—Return.
- 368. Arterial Drainage (Ireland)—Return.
- 369. War Department (Purchase of Houses)—Correspondence.

Delivered on 3rd and 5th July, 1858.

- 371. Education (Mauritius)—Return.
- 355. Wheat, &c.—Returns.
- 373. Expiring Laws—Report from Committee.
- 374. Irremovable Poor—Report from Committee.
- 377. Emigration—Return.
- 378. Imports and Exports (British Colonies)—Return.
- 168. Bills—Universities (Scotland) as amended in Committee and on Re-commitment.
- 171. ——— Judgments (Ireland) Act Amendment.
- 174. ——— Four Courts (Dublin) Extension (as amended by the Select Committee).
- 170. ——— Government of New Caledonia.
- 172. ——— Admiralty Court.
- 173. ——— Superannuation Law Amendment.
- 175. ——— Detached Parts of Counties.
- 176. ——— Police (Scotland) Act Amendment.
- 177. ——— Lunatics (Scotland) Act Amendment.

PATENT LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

APPLICATIONS FOR PATENTS AND PROTECTION ALLOWED.

[From Gazette, July 2, 1858.]

- Dated 6th March, 1858.*
- 460. P. A. Cap, Paris—An improved construction of billiard table for drawing-rooms.
- Dated 19th May, 1858.*
- 1112. H. Walker, Gresham-street—Imp. in the manufacture of needles.
- Dated 29th May, 1858.*
- 1214. T. V. Lee, Thames-chambers, York-buildings, Adelphi—Imp. in the construction of steam generators applicable to marine locomotive and all other uses where steam is applied as the motive power.
- 1216. D. Hebson, Liverpool—Imp. in ships' gear, part of which is applicable to forming ropes for general purposes.
- Dated 3rd June, 1858.*
- 1248. T. Scholefield, Paris—Imp. in gas meters.
- Dated 8th June, 1858.*
- 1286. R. Wappenstein, Manchester—Imp. in the manufacture of artificial whalebone, applicable to umbrellas, parasols, stays, hats, bonnets, reeds, crinolines, and other similar purposes.
- 1288. J. C. Quince, Crosby-hall Chambers, Bishopsgate—Imp. in stoppers for bottles and jars.
- 1292. J. Bunnett, Deptford—Imp. in the construction of floors, roofs, and arches.
- 1294. J. Rawlings, Collingbourn Ducis, Wiltshire—Imp. in thrashing machines.
- Dated 9th June, 1858.*
- 1296. G. Suares, 1, Cullum-street, Fenchurch-street—An imp. in fire-arms. (A com.)
- 1298. D. Moseley, Chapel Field Works, Ardwick—Imp. in machinery used in the manufacture of vulcanized india-rubber thread.
- 1300. E. T. Hughes, 123, Chancery-lane—Imp. in machinery or apparatus for sowing grain. (A com.)
- 1302. W. A. Gilbee, 4, South-street, Finsbury—Imp. in the construction of railway wheels. (A com.)
- 1304. J. Easterbrook, Sheffield—An imp. in ratchet braces.
- 1306. T. W. G. Treeby, 1, Westbourne-terrace Villas, Upper Westbourne-terrace, Paddington—Imp. in revolving fire arms and cannon and cartridges.
- 1308. T. Robinson and H. Ogden, Manchester—Imp. in safety lamps, and in apparatus connected therewith.
- 1310. C. Cammell, Cyclops Steel Works, Sheffield—Imp. in railway buffers.
- Dated 10th June, 1858.*
- 1312. G. Castle, 10, Tamworth road, Croydon—Ventilating women's stays by means of perforation.
- 1314. J. Luis, 1b, Welbeck-street, Cavendish-square—An alembic wine examiner. (A com.)
- 1316. J. Luis, 1b, Welbeck-street, Cavendish-square—An improved balance-beam thrashing machine. (A com.)
- 1318. T. Chatwin and C. Taylor, Birmingham—Imp. in screw stocks.
- 1322. H. Reynolds, King William street—An improved method of separating glycerine from saline and other substances.
- 1324. W. C. Wilkins, Long-acre—Imp. in lighthouses.
- Dated 11th June, 1858.*
- 1328. G. Bartholomew, Linlithgow, N. B.—Imp. in that description of gas meters commonly called wet meters.
- 1330. S. Cheavin, Spalding—An improved preparation or combination of mineral substances, applicable for use as a pigment, cement, or mastic, or to be used either alone or in combination with other well known materials for washing, scouring, cleansing, or bleaching purposes.
- 1332. G. W. Hart, 5, Osborn-terrace, Southsea—Imp. in the manufacture of locks.
- Dated 12th June, 1858.*
- 1334. G. T. Stieler, Manchester—Imp. in the means for generating steam and economising fuel.
- 1336. W. Clark, 53, Chancery-lane—Imp. in machinery for combing cotton and other fibrous material. (A com.)
- Dated 14th June, 1858.*
- 1340. W. Clark, 53, Chancery-lane—Imp. in certain poles or rods. (A com.)
- 1342. H. J. Daniell, Donington-park, Derbyshire—A process by which the stamp on bankers' cheques is cancelled, and the cheque indelibly and simultaneously crossed.

- 1314. G. Neall, Northampton—Imp. in gas stoves for warming, cooking, and other purposes; as also in the saucepans, kettles, or other utensils to be used with the same.

- 1346. J. H. Johnson, 47, Lincoln's-inn-fields—Imp. in machinery or apparatus for breaking or crushing stones for road metal, and other purposes, and for crushing ores and other hard and brittle substances. (A com.)

Dated 17th June, 1858.

- 1369. J. H. Marsden, Manchester—Certain imp. in the manufacture of hats.

- 1371. J. Haslam, Preston—Imp. in looms for weaving, and also in shuttles and pickers connected therewith.

- 1373. A. Dawson, 14, Barnes-place, Mile End-road—Improved apparatus for converting small coals or coal dust, or small coals and coke, or coal dust and coke, with the admixture of water or other materials into artificial fuel.

- 1375. S. Taylor and D. Taylor, Rochdale—Imp. in machinery or apparatus for putting machine straps or belts on to pulleys or drums, and for removing the same.

Dated 18th June, 1858.

- 1379. R. S. Newall, Gateshead—Imp. in the manufacture of cords, ropes, and cables.

- 1381. P. B. E. Martin, Paris—Imp. in obtaining electro-motive power.

Dated 19th June, 1858.

- 1383. S. Hewitt, Manchester—An improved application of printed designs to cotton and other fabrics, and for imp. in the treatment during the processes of printing and finishing such fabrics.

- 1385. J. Bradshaw, Bolton-le-Moors—Certain imp. in apparatus for obtaining and producing motive power.

- 1387. R. Winans and T. Winans, Baltimore, U.S.—A new and improved steam vessel.

- 1389. R. Winans and T. Winans, Baltimore, U.S.—A new and useful imp. in the mode of combining the engines and propeller shafts of steam vessels.

- 1391. H. Becu, Merville, France—Imp. in the manufacture of lathes, and in fixing and nailing the same.

Dated 21st June, 1858.

- 1393. H. H. Henson, 38, Parliament-street—Preserving or waterproofing ropes, strands, cordage, cables, and other similar articles.

- 1395. R. A. Brooman, 166, Fleet street—Imp. in treating wood to preserve and colour it, and in apparatuses to be employed therein. (A com.)

- 1397. J. Crossley, St. Helens, Lancashire—Imp. in machinery for grinding, smoothing, and polishing glass.

- 1399. W. Thrift and A. High, Bedford street, Commercial-road East—Imp. in house water closets.

- 1401. A. V. Newton, 66, Chancery-lane—An imp. in the manufacture of spoons and forks. (A com.)

- 1403. G. R. Scriven, Philadelphia, U.S.—An improved apparatus for ventilating, and for circulating, moving, or otherwise acting upon air or other fluids.

Dated 22nd June, 1858.

- 1405. M. Mayall and G. Jackson, Mossley, Lancashire—Imp. in machinery or apparatus for spinning cotton and other fibrous substances.

- 1407. W. Galloway and J. Galloway, Manchester—Imp. in machinery for cutting, bruising, chipping, and rasping, and otherwise treating or preparing dye woods and roots, or other vegetable substances.

- 1409. J. A. Rainé, 16, Wells-street, Gray's-inn-road—Imp. in collapsible framework for bedsteads, sofas, and other like articles of furniture.

- 1411. P. Brown and B. Young, Spa-road, Bermondsey—Imp. in the manufacture of white lead.

- 1413. J. Robertson, Glasgow—Imp. in apparatus for regulating the flow or passage of fluids. (A com.)

Dated 23rd June, 1858.

- 1415. T. Spencer, 192, Euston-road, Euston-square—Imp. in the treatment of iron ores and ferruginous sands, and certain applications arising therefrom.

- 1417. P. J. Livsey, Manchester, and F. L. Stott, Rochdale—Imp. applicable to machinery for warping yarns or threads.

- 1419. R. Armstrong, North Woolwich—Imp. in steam-boilers and furnaces. (Partly a com.)

- 1421. R. Rumney, J. Mellor, and W. S. Macdonald, Manchester—Imp. in dyeing and printing cotton, wool, silk, and other materials and fabrics.

WEEKLY LIST OF PATENTS SEALED.

July 2nd.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 17. J. Platt. | 26. F. P. Cappon. |
| 58. J. B. A. Couder. | 27. J. Reilly, Junr. |
| 85. V. De Tivoli. | 29. R. and J. Philp. |
| 106. W. White. | 34. P. Soames and J. C. Evans. |
| 140. W. E. Newton. | 35. R. A. Brooman. |
| 144. J. Harthan and E. Harthan. | 36. H. Atkins. |
| 618. C. N. Kottula. | 151. C. N. Kottula. |
| 986. J. G. Appold. | 293. H. Wilde. |
| <i>July 6th.</i> | 617. C. N. Kottula. |
| 22. J. D. Malcolm. | 619. C. N. Kottula. |
| 23. M. L. J. Lavater. | 999. W. S. Hollands. |
| | 1013. W. E. Newton. |

PATENTS ON WHICH THE STAMP DUTY OF £50 HAS BEEN PAID.

June 29th.

- 1502. R. Tidmarsh.

July 3rd.

- 1499. R. Muckett.
- 1520. J. Beckett and W. Seed.